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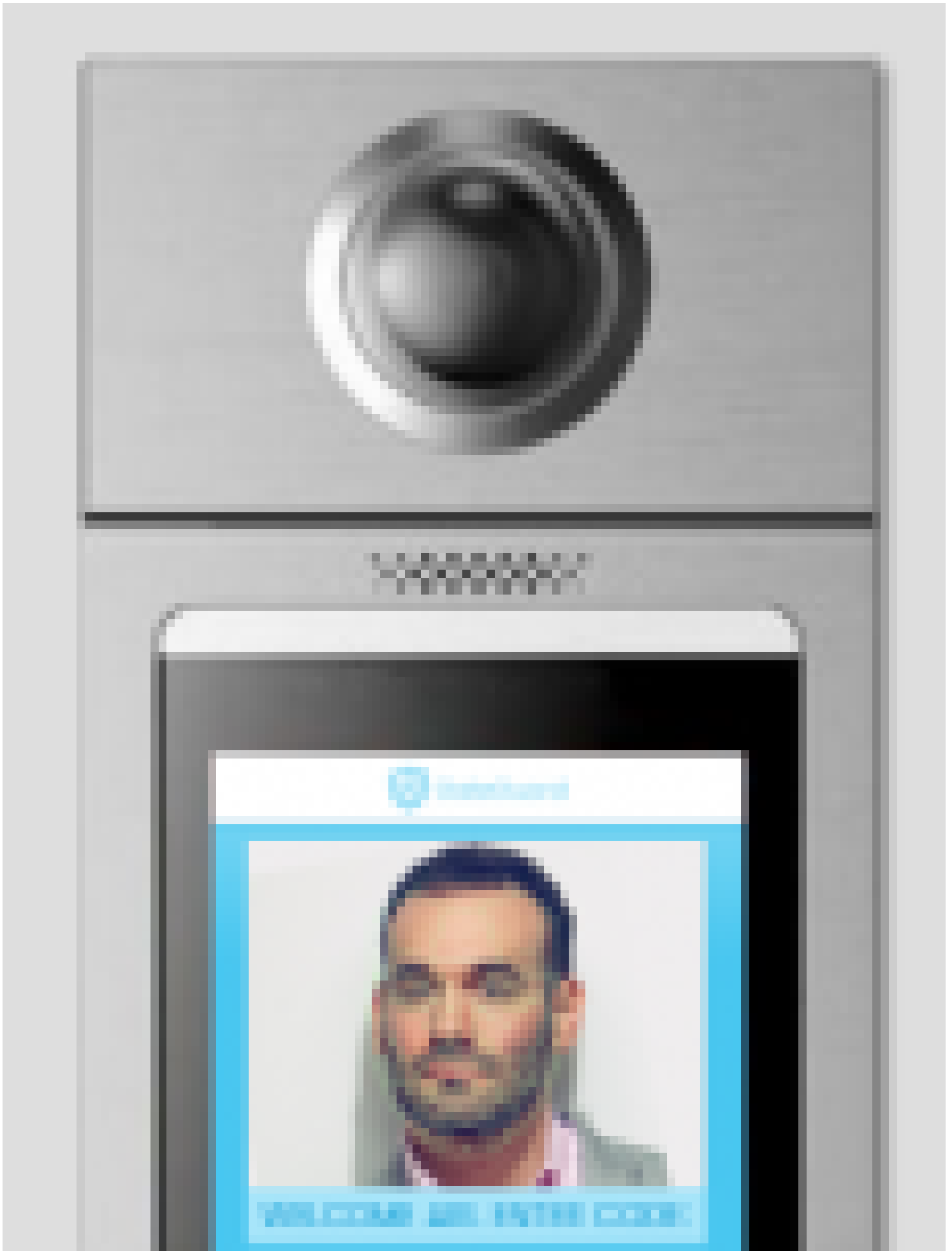
NEW YORK

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New tool allows landlords to track who goes in and out of rental apartments

GateGuard aims to crack down on illegal Airbnb sublets





Gate Guard and Ari Teman (click to enlarge)

By Konrad Putzier

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Depending on where you stand, Ari Teman's new product is either a neat amenity or a big step toward total surveillance of tenants. Or maybe it's both.

GateGuard is similar to a virtual doorman: Installed at a building's front door, it allows tenants to accept deliveries or buzz in friends. But it also includes a camera with face recognition technology that records who enters which unit at what time, and transmits that information to an online dashboard.

The landlord can check the dashboard to see which units have not seen their official tenants in a while, and which units have seen a lot of guests with suitcases. It sends alerts when unrecognized faces show up repeatedly at an apartment. In other words, it allows them to weed out illegal sublets and Airbnb listings.

Last year, Teman launched **SubletSpy**, a company that scours online listing websites on behalf of landlords to find illegal Airbnb listings. GateGuard applies the online concept to physical buildings. Teman claims the tool makes buildings safer and saves tenants time.

But would the surveillance go too far? Arthur Schwartz, a labor attorney who was recently **fined for taking down a surveillance camera** outside his client's rent-regulated apartment, doesn't think so.



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"I think that landlords have a legitimate business knowing whether someone is subletting on Airbnb," Schwartz said. "I don't see that as crossing any line."

He pointed out that old-fashioned security cameras already allow landlords to track who enters which apartment – although the process is more laborious.

So far, Teman claims he has sold GateGuard to 24 buildings. Michael Mintz, CEO of MD Squared Property Group, for example, told The Real Deal he is seriously considering installing the system in part "to more closely see who's coming in and out of the building." But the main appeal, to him, is price: GateGuard is notably cheaper than most virtual doormen or voice intercom systems.

Morris Levy, co-founder of co-working company the Yard, said he plans to install the system in the Yard's locations and called the facial recognition component "very interesting."

Teman, a comedian, has had a bone to pick with Airbnb ever since an Airbnb guest tried to use Teman's Chelsea apartment for an orgy advertised as "XXX Freak Fest" in 2014. Teman claimed that he was subsequently evicted and was registered in a database for risky renters.

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Airbnb



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